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WIZZARDS OF TECH

Computer Excellence at Mount Everett High

By Jane Burke

For one of the smallest high schools in Massachusetts, the performance was remarkable: A team from Mount Everett High School wound up in the top 11th percentile of 3,500 competitors in the National Youth Cyber Defense Competition, held November 10 under the auspices of the United States Air Force. Finding security vulnerabilities in three types of operating systems, Windows 10, Windows Server, and Linux, and troubleshooting a virtual network with Cisco’s Packet Tracer application, the team will likely be placed in the “Platinum Tier” for the state championships in December.

The result was no fluke. Mount Everett students have also participated in the SeaPerch underwater robotics competition and the VEX Robotics Challenge, in which they built and programmed robots to complete complex tasks. They prepared for these events through courses that are part of the relatively new Mount Everett Technology Pathway, where the offerings include Sea & Air Robotics, Python, Students as Technology Leaders (SaTL), Networking, Drones, and 3D Engineering Design, plus online courses such as AP Computer Science and Video Game Design.

Four years ago, Technology Director Chris Thompson introduced his students to competition as part of their regular coursework. “If you give kids the opportunity to shine, they will take it,” he says. “The competition is a great motivation for excellence. My job is to give them the resources to put themselves in



A student practices guiding a robot on the VEX game board with the use of a controller.

photos by Kari Giordano

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A cyber-security class prepares for a competition.

charge of their own learning.” Cyber team members Mikel Norris and Travis McLoughlin concur and cite the challenges that motivate them: “Mr. Thompson comes up with new ideas every week. He teaches us how to teach ourselves.” The two students have launched “Tech Talk,” a podcast on Spotify. In their latest episode, they interviewed Carina Alden,

continued

Wizards, continued

a 2013 Mount Everett graduate from Sandisfield (one of the only girls on the high school robotics team at that time) and now a weather analyst at NASA Space Flight Center, working on the Moon to Mars Program.

Tech excellence starts early at Southern Berkshire Regional School District, with Mr. Thompson facilitating after-school robotics programs for younger students. Joined by Charles Miller, principal of the elementary schools, he runs the weekly practice in Wonder League Robotics for grades three through five, with a focus on coding. The students, provided with prebuilt robots, are given engineering challenges, such as adding extensions to help the robots work more effectively. Though they don't travel to competitions, younger students do produce videos of their robots' actions, which they upload, along with the relevant code, to a judging committee.

Led by Mount Everett science teacher Lindsey Berkowitz, who was introduced to robotics at Flying Cloud Institute when she was twelve, another new program has been enthusiastically received in grades six through eight. Students use the VEX IQ platform, through which they build and program plastic robots, using the same sensors and programming software that the high school students employ with metal VEX robots. There are eighteen high school students participating this year, looking to go to a competition

in the Worcester area in January.

To all this Mr. Thompson adds, "We just got approval this week from Google and Coursera to be a 'Grow with Google' partner. Students will start this quarter

working toward Google certifications in IT support and automation with Python. There are other courses we may be able to offer next year, like an android app development course." Students in the SaTL course mentioned that community members can email them at satl@sbrsd.org to get help with their technology questions. They will also be helping with the "Hour of Code" event at school on December 6, where all students in the District are invited to have some fun with coding.

How has such a relatively small school as Mount Everett been able to build such a robust program and have a cutting edge makerspace, chock full of equipment and materials for invention? The answer goes back to the 1990s when an inspired Mount Everett science teacher, Paul O'Brien, heard about the Tour de Sol solar car race from one of his students interested in partici-

pating. He recruited specialists in the community to help students build solar-powered vehicles and attend regional competitions. Often they were the only high school students competing.

In 2006 Paul O'Brien, in recognition of the many innovative vehicles his students brought to competition



Logan Reynolds and Travis McLoughlin work together during Round 1 of the Cyber Defense Competition. photos by Kari Giordano




Chris Thompson observes a student working on a program for a VEX robot during a class in the makerspace.



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over the years, won the Bradford Teacher Award from the Northeast Solar Energy Association. He eventually became director of technology for the District and, in collaboration with Flying Cloud Institute, fostered the growth of the robotics program. Retirement did not end his desire to connect Mount Everett students with innovative developments. He teamed up with Southfield resident Tim Newman to introduce the makerspace as an after-school program for younger students to meet weekly to tinker and invent. It was first housed in an unused space on campus, using rudimentary equipment and donated materials. The facility upgrade to a state-of-the-art space in the main building was made possible by Pittsfield-based Sabic Plastics, whose engineers donated time to build and equip the Mount Everett makerspace in its present location.

All of this has contributed to Mount Everett's amazing record of building winning teams. After a poor showing in their first year at the Tour de Sol Competition, Mount Everett went on to win with an all-women team one year and with a hybrid vehicle another. First Tech Challenge wins included state championships in 2013 and 2014. In 2015, they placed 29th in the World Championship, beating Russian and Chinese teams. In 2018 they missed a single maneuver and were narrowly edged out of the Southern New England Championship. This was followed in 2019 by third-place finishes in the National SeaPerch Competition and the Gold Tier of the National Cyber Youth Defense Competition. They also placed third in the qualifier at Central Connecticut State University.

After graduating in 1991 from Mount Everett, where he first encountered Paul O'Brien as his seventh grade

science teacher, and then earning a teaching degree, Chris Thompson returned to New Marlborough in 2000 to stay with his parents, Judy and Harvey Thompson. While enrolled in the Lesley University's Masters in Educational Technology program, a job opening teaching video production and computer applications came up at Mount Everett, which was exactly what he was looking for. As a faculty member in the technology department of a small school, he was then tapped by Mr. O'Brien to work with Lego Robotics, about which he had, to that point, no knowledge. This led first to teaching and eventually to management of the technology needs of the District, including long-term planning, budgeting, equipment procurement, maintenance, and user information.



Chris Thompson explains the operation of a student-made robotic arm. photo by Jane Burke

“Everything I’ve learned in terms of robotics and coding has come on the job,” says Chris Thompson. “So, I’m very thankful that I was able to grow as an educator with the help of Paul O’Brien. Everything I learned

in my educational technology Masters’ program is now obsolete. That’s what I am trying to teach the kids when I bring new programs like these – we figure it out together. This generation, more than any before, will have to be life-long learners.” □

Jane Burke is chair of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District School Committee



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BOARD OF SELECTMEN



October 27: The full Board of Selectmen, along with the members of the New Marlborough Housing Committee and Construct, Inc. Executive Director Jane Ralph and Housing Director June Wolfe, met at 5:30 p.m. to discuss a possible future use for Cassilis Farm. The property, located at 640 Hartsville New Marlborough Road, was to have been the new location of Dewey Academy, but that plan fell through earlier this year.

Board of Selectmen Chairman Richard Long asked Elizabeth Rosenberg, Chair of the Housing Committee, to provide some background on the purpose of the meeting. She began by saying she “had a vision” two years ago while looking at Cassilis Farm as a potential affordable housing site, but that went away for a while when it looked like Dewey Academy would be moving in, only to be revived this summer. Ms. Rosenberg asked Construct’s June Wolfe to conduct a feasibility study, citing the need for affordable apartments and houses that would draw younger people to live and work in New Marlborough. She added that a renovation of the rambling mansion would have the bonus of saving one of the town’s historic houses.

Mr. Long asked, “What’s the rush?” perhaps a leading question, since he also serves on the Housing Committee. The answer was that the deadline for submission of paperwork for entry into competition for a major grant was the following day, October 28. **A commitment on the part of the Town of New Marlborough was a crucial piece in order for Construct, Inc. to take this initial step toward establishing the first affordable housing in New Marlborough.** Jane Ralph then provided a short history of Construct, which for fifty years has been focused on affordable housing in Southern Berkshire county and finding ways to transform properties “to meet the need.”

June Wolfe followed with details of her feasibility study, saying that the Cassilis Farm’s main house and annex lends themselves to conversion into a likely thirteen units of varying sizes, including one handicap-accessible unit on the ground floor. The cost of getting the building up to code and energy efficient is significant – roughly \$6 million or, on average, \$485,000 per unit. Most of the funding, she said, would come from government sources.

Addressing the human and practical need for this housing, Ms. Wolfe used the phrase “millennial valley,” referring to the exodus of younger people from their rural hometowns where they cannot afford to live, and not returning, if at all, until retirement age, at which point they are beyond the ability to serve as volunteer firefighters or the desire to work as restaurant or highway department employees. She said that applicants for affordable housing must be able to show that they are “cost-burdened” by rents that are more than 50 percent of their gross income. The state sets a ceiling of one-third of a household’s income for renters of affordable homes.

Ms. Wolfe reiterated that the object of this meeting was to get the Board of Selectmen’s commitment to the concept – in the form of a monetary stake – so that Construct could submit the preliminary paperwork that would get them into the winter round of the granting process. Chairman Long said that, while the Town does not have sufficient available funds immediately at hand to make a meaningful commitment, **it is in line to receive \$426,610 in funds via the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), and affordable housing is deemed a valid use of this funding.** “The time to decide is right now,” emphasized Mr. Long.

Selectman Tara White had questions: The first was,



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since Construct is a non-profit organization, would the property go off the tax rolls? When this was answered in the affirmative, Ms. White said that the possible increase in property taxes could be a problem for some townspeople. June Wolfe replied that, in cases where this has become a stumbling block, Construct has been able to substitute Payment In Lieu Of Taxes (PILOT) agreements. Ms. White further resisted arguments, first by Mr. Long that the conversion of Cassilis could serve an important public purpose, with the town benefiting from the addition of new residents, and then by of Housing Committee member Will Regan, who brought up the possibility of an unprincipled developer acquiring the property through Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40B, which would place construction outside the Town's protective bylaws.

Ms. White then expressed her concern that locals might not be given a preference for affordable housing, Ms. Wolfe concurred, saying that, in the state's eyes, giving preference to local people in an overwhelmingly non-diverse town like New Marlborough would be seen as "undercover racism." She added, however, that, in the lottery system that Construct uses in selecting new tenants, local applicants are given two lottery tickets to the outsiders' one.

Ms. White voiced another concern, echoed by Selectman Mark Carson, over the septic system and public water supply that would be required. Ms. Wolfe said that a recent test of the septic system showed that it was capable of handling the waste of eighteen bathrooms. Well water, she conceded, would need to conform to DEP standards. To Mr. Carson's worry that families with children might be in danger from residual lead paint, Ms. Wolfe responded that lead paint remediation would be part of the substantial overhaul of the buildings.

In an expression of her underlying concern over the lack of affordable housing in New Marlborough, Tara

White raised the subject of the proliferation of short-term rentals of homes and auxiliary apartments to out-of-towners, which, while profitable for the owners, removes potential long-term rentals from the market. Her sense of frustration was shared by others in attendance.

Cassilis Farm's main house and annex lends itself to conversion into a likely thirteen units

Getting to the crux of the matter, the ARPA funding, Mr. Carson said that he was leaning against earmarking funds for the project because he did not trust the government to come through with the money. Ms. Wolfe said that, in her experience, "the money has always come through." Mr. Long made the point that the Town does not stand to lose anything if Construct is not successful with the grant process, but he felt that, one way or the other, it is important to show that the Town is philosophically in tune with the aim of achieving affordable housing. He then proposed that the Board of Selectmen, which has the sole authority to allocate ARPA funds, indicate that, for the purposes of the grant application, one-half of the ARPA money be designated for the Cassilis Farm project.

To Ms. White's view that repairs to storm-vulnerable roads in town should be a priority, Mr. Long questioned whether road reconstruction was among the permitted

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uses of ARPA funds. Ms. Wolfe stated that \$400,000 was the figure needed for the grant application, which could come partially from private sources, but even with that, \$200,000 would not be viewed as a particularly strong commitment from the Town.

Chairman Long then pointed out the ARPA funds are essentially “found money,” not raised by local taxes or part of any existing Town funds. With that he made the following motion: **“Resolved, that the Town of New Marlborough Board of Selectmen is strongly supportive of the proposed affordable housing project development of Cassilis Farm by Construct, Inc., and that the Board commits to make available to the project no less than 50 percent of the allocated sum of \$426,610 to New Marlborough, when available; and, it further resolves that if other purposes do not qualify under ARPA rules, it will commit the remaining ARPA funds to the housing project; and, it is further resolved that the Town will hold an information session for town citizens, as soon as may be reasonably possible.”**

Despite the reticence shown by Ms. White and Mr. Carson, the motion passed unanimously. **The sum of \$213,305 has been earmarked for the project and an information meeting will be scheduled in the near future.** Mr. Long thanked the representatives from Construct, Inc. and the members of the Housing Committee for their participation.

Before closing the meeting, Town Administrator Mari Enoch spoke briefly of the need to search for a new tax collector. Mr. Long agreed that a posting of the position should be created as soon as possible. The meeting then adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Larry Burke, larryjburke@gmail.com

November 1: The Board got things moving with approval of a pole permit that will allow National Grid to bring electrical service to 141 Brewer Hill Road.

The selectmen then turned to Barbara Marchione,


chair of the Highway Planning Work Group, for an update on state and federal help in financing storm-damaged road repair. The Highway Department has already spent \$200,000 rebuilding a washout on Campbell Falls Road, said Ms. Marchione, but it still faces some \$200,000 of storm-damage mitigation elsewhere. Dirt roads need re-topping and culverts blocked by storm debris need to be cleared. Mark Carson reminded his fellow selectmen that roadways next to river banks in Hartsville also needed priority attention.

In seeking government assistance, Ms. Marchione commented, perhaps all too predictably, that “the wheels [of bureaucracy] turn slowly.” She is now looking to a December 3 meeting of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for an indication of the amount of road repair dollars it plans to recommend.

(The financing itself, Ms. Marchione explained, actually comes not from MEMA but from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.) She suggested that funds from the American Rescue Plan Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act might also become available. “It’s hurry up and wait,” she said of the application process.

Turning to other matters, the Board made official the staffing of the Capital Planning Committee, naming Mark Walker to a term ending June 30, 2022; Nat Yohalem, June 30, 2023; and John Halbreich, June 30, 2024. Town Administrator Mari Enoch reviewed progress on a state-initiated program to test both public water supplies and private wells for contaminants. She reported that Health Inspector Scott McFarland has conferred with officials at the University of Massachusetts, who will be assisting in the testing and urged that town residents apply to the state Department of Environmental Protection to be included in the study. **Up to thirty wells in town will be tested.** Chairman Richard Long advised that any communication from the Town on water contamination

Giving preference to local people in an overwhelmingly non-diverse town like New Marlborough would be seen as “undercover racism.”



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be carefully worded. “We don’t want to create a panic,” he said.

Following a review of minutes from previous meetings, the Board moved into executive session to discuss Town employee compensation.

November 15: In the first item of business, Jason Barbeau appeared before the Board to review measures he and his wife, Meghan, were taking for reinstatement of a license for their dog kennel. They will be installing fencing at its new location on New Marlborough Branch Road, said Mr. Barbeau, and he hoped that an inspection would then lead to the issuance of a new permit. Animal Control Officer Cassie Keeley said revocation of the license was based on seven issues — not just fencing. New Marlborough Branch Road resident Cynthia Atwood objected to the presence of the kennel, based on its past record, in her neighborhood. Chairman Richard Long added that the Board was not prepared to reverse its decision, a view seconded by Tara White. With that a decision on a kennel permit was put off until a proper inspection could be completed.

The Board then turned its attention to the adequate staffing of emergency management. Fire Chief Chuck Loring noted that at times both the Fire Department and the ambulance service were understaffed, particularly during the day. **He proposed that the Town adopt a measure used in other towns — Sandisfield among them — to compensate a first responder to be on call during the day, every day.**

To Mr. Long’s question whether a single person would be sufficient, Mr. Loring said there may still be gaps, but they will be fewer. Fire Department President David Smith, noting Fire and EMT already had more calls, 300 so far this year, than in all of last, said “We’re making it work, but we’d like to think that a paid person would help.”

Mr. Long noted that the idea of regionalization of departments was greeted with push-back by towns that wanted their own departments. Mr. Loring said that he has met with representatives of other towns in South County to investigate group purchasing of equipment,

but that any agreement is probably fifteen years down the road. Ms. White asked for guidelines on the cost of paying for day-time coverage of emergency calls, and Mr. Long agreed that the Board would need a formal proposal from Fire and Rescue to move forward. With that, the issue was pushed to a future meeting.

Joe Poindexter, boydpoindexter@gmail.com

November 22: Chairman Richard Long convened a Zoom meeting at 1:00 p.m. with the full Board of Selectmen, plus Town Administrator Mari Enoch, for the sole item on the agenda – the proposed contract between the Town and the New Marlborough Highway Department union’s bargaining unit. Having as yet received no response from the union, Mr. Long, guessing that the bargaining unit needed more time to consider the offer, asked Tara White and Mark Carson if the Board should postpone its decision. Yes was the immediate answer. Following a unanimous vote in favor of the motion to postpone, Mr. Long adjourned the meeting at 1:03 p.m. □

Larry Burke

HUNTING SEASON

Black bear: November 29 to 9 December 11

Deer, Shotgun: November 29 to December 11

Deer, Primitive Rifle: December 13 to December 31



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PLANNING BOARD

November 8: Chairman Mark Carson began the meeting with a call for a decision on an ANR request (ANR stands for Approval Not Required and applies to any lot that has the minimum zoning requirement of 1 acre and 150 feet of read frontage). It would pertain to the division of 1.792 acres from the 200-acre Pelky Farm, located near the intersection of Brewer Hill and Hayes Hill Roads. Since the other two Planning Board members present — Bob Hartt and Paul Marcel — had not received maps showing the division, the matter was postponed to a future meeting.

Under the heading of new business, Mr. Hartt, responding to a complaint from a property owner who abuts one of the large solar fields in town, proposed that the Town's solar array bylaw be amended to specify limits on noise. On Mr. Carson's suggestion, Mr. Hartt agreed to review a Dalton solar bylaw that specifies permissible noise levels in preparation of a warrant item for the 2022 Annual Town Meeting.

Turning to old business, Mr. Carson said there was nothing new to report on river-bank remediation. Mr. Hartt said that he is making progress on the formulation of a draft for a Dark Sky bylaw and hopes to prevail upon other members of the Board to take on sections of the draft to compare with details of other towns'

Dark Sky bylaws. He added that, probably as a result of his heightened attention to this topic, he has been noticing a few properties "lit up like Christmas trees" at night, including Berkshire Spring Water and the Town Highway Department garage.

Mark Carson then expressed his hope that the Board can meet in person in the near future, to which the two other attending members agreed. Turning to public comment, Tara White spoke up to say that, since leaves have fallen, lighting from her neighbor, Berkshire Spring Water, has become more noticeable. She wondered if the company had installed new, brighter security lighting.

Turning to another local issue, Bob Hartt said that he had been receiving negative comments from townspeople on the Historical Commission's proposed limitations on demolition of historically valuable buildings. He said that he himself was torn between the concepts of property rights and historic preservation and hoped that an examination of other towns' ordinances might reveal a middle ground that is acceptable to the voters.

Having concluded the evening business, Chairman Carson adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m. □

Larry Burke

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NEIGHBORS



Ava Onya Sobolew



Theia Sofia Sobolew

Adam Sobolew and Alexa Clay of Mill River are excited to announce the birth of their twin daughters, Ava Onya Sobolew and Theia Sofia Sobolew. The girls were born on October 30 at Baystate Hospital, weighing 6 pounds 13 ounces and 4 pounds 15 ounces respectively. They were a bit too petite for their Halloween costumes (a Dalmatian and ladybug), but both babies are thriving and doing beautifully. Adam and Alexa moved to New Marlborough from Philadelphia a year ago. These are the first grandchildren for the grandparents on both sides of the family, who are collectively thrilled. □

compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com

A memorial will be held for David Lowman, Saturday, December 4, 3:00 p.m. at the Southfield Church. Church covid protocols require proof of vaccination and a mask.

LAND TRUST NEWS



With the winter at our doorstep and the holidays around the corner, it's nice to be outside and witness the changing of the season. This is a time to reflect and restore. Visiting our beautiful landscapes and exploring our trails gives us all an opportunity to do just that.

The New Marlborough Land Trust welcomes three new members to our Board: Tes Reed, Jake Levin, and Nathaniel Bossi. Tes, a longtime resident of New Marlborough, is an environmental educator. Jake, who grew up in New Marlborough, is a professional butcher and the author of *Smokehouse Handbook*. Nathaniel is a local woodworker and avid outdoor athlete. We would like to thank outgoing Board members John Field, David Hosford, and Rebecca Schreiber, for their great support and enthusiasm.

Fall property projects continue with the clearing of the hedgerow and removal of a fallen tree at the entryway of the Goodnow Preserve. Trails remain our focus – clearing blowdowns and addressing wet areas. □

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THE DEMOLITION-DELAY PROPOSAL

How a Bylaw To Help Preserve Historic Buildings Would Work

By Barry R. Shapiro

It was the last remaining one-room schoolhouse in Sheffield and had occupied the same scenic spot on the west side of Boardman Street for over 150 years. Although it had long since become a private residence, with a small extension added on the south side of the building, it still looked like everyone's idea of a classic one-room schoolhouse: a single story, clapboard-sided building with a front entrance. For locals and visitors alike, the Old Schoolhouse Number 8 was iconic. Word has it that the original school benches were still screwed into the old wide-plank pine flooring and the blackboards, perhaps still bearing traces of the ornate script of a 19th century schoolmarm, still adorned the walls.

And then, early one morning, shortly after the elderly couple who owned it had passed away, and without any notice to the neighbors, a huge Caterpillar D16 bulldozer appeared at the property and leveled the schoolhouse, obliterating, in a matter of minutes, a part of Sheffield history.

"That scenario is just what we are trying to prevent with our proposed demolition bylaw," says John Schreiber, chair of the New Marlborough Historical Commission, which is tasked by the commonwealth with assisting in local preservation. "Our town is defined as much by its historical structures as it is by its hills, rivers and open land. This draft bylaw, which we have crafted over many months of public meetings and consultations with many residents, would simply require that someone who applies for a permit to demolish an historic building pause for a reasonable period of time and work with the Commission to see if there are any alternatives to razing the structure."

The fact that a demolition delay bylaw is being




The 150-year-old Schoolhouse Number 8 in Sheffield was bulldozed before the town adopted a demolition-delay bylaw.

considered — a draft of the proposed bylaw is available on the Town website — has already stirred up resistance among property owners in town. Some members of the community are pushing back on the notion that Town government can tell them what to do with their property. They have asserted that the bylaw is discriminatory since it only applies to old homes and not newer ones; that the bylaw may be burdensome for some homeowners without financial resources; that any available funding is not likely to be sufficient and will be very difficult to obtain; that it represents a restriction on what people can do with their land, that it delegates decision-making to a small group of unelected officials (members of the Commission, like many other town bodies, are appointed by the Board of Selectmen and not elected); and that any such bylaw needs to be part of a larger discussion about the future of the Town and "who we want to be."

Dr. Schreiber is quick to counter that the ultimate decision lies with the property owner. "If there are no alternatives acceptable to the owner," he says, "demolition can continue. Some 150 towns in Massachusetts, about half of all towns, have adopted a demolition bylaw, including Stockbridge, Williamstown, Lenox, and Sheffield [albeit too late for Schoolhouse Number 8], and there are many examples of historic buildings being saved as a result."

The draft bylaw referred to by Dr. Schreiber, available on the town website and entitled "Historical Structure Demolition Pause Bylaw," states that:

- The bylaw applies only to "significant structures."



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In the Commission's judgement, this term applies to buildings on the National Register of Historic Places, or those that have historical, architectural, or geographic importance, or were built prior to 1901. The Commission would in each instance make the determination if the structure is "significant".

- A current bylaw requires that anyone desiring to demolish a building first apply to the building inspector for a demolition permit. The new bylaw would require that a copy of the permit be provided to the Historical Commission, either by the building inspector or the owner.
- The Commission then has ten business days to determine if the building is "significant." If it determines that the building is not significant, the demolition permit can be issued without further involvement by the Commission. If it determines that the building is significant, the permit is put on hold until a public hearing is held within thirty days after the determination.
- Within ten days, the Commission must decide whether demolition of the structure would be "detrimental to the historical, geographical or architectural heritage or resources of the Town." If the answer is yes, then no demolition permit may be issued for nine months from the date on which the permit request was originally received by the building inspector. (Other towns have adopted bylaws with waiting periods of six, twelve, eighteen, or even twenty-four months.)
- During this nine-month period, the Commission will work with the property owner to explore alternatives to demolition, including obtaining assistance from state and local governments or private organizations to help restore or repurpose the property. But if by the end of this period no viable alternative is found, a demolition permit may be issued by the inspector. (It can be issued even earlier if it becomes apparent that there is no alternative to demolition.)
- The draft bylaw contains provisions for emergency demolition and specifies a penalty of \$500 if a

structure is demolished without first obtaining a permit, theoretically for every day until the violation is corrected.

"People should please understand that this draft bylaw does not allow the Commission to stop a demolition," says Dr. Schreiber. "It merely imposes a pause of nine months total, a kind of window of opportunity, during which alternatives can be explored. After the pause, the property owner has the absolute right to proceed with the demolition by continuing the regular permitting process with the building inspector. Demolition delay bylaws are considered by the Massachusetts State Historical Commission as an ideal compromise between homeowner rights and responsibilities in acquiring an historic structure."

The bylaw can only be adopted by a majority vote at the Town's Annual Meeting, usually held on the first Monday in May, and will be placed on the warrant for the meeting at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen, to which the bylaw has not yet been presented. It can also be added to the warrant by a petition from ten registered voters.

"We are still drafting and revising the bylaw and really want the input of the community," adds Dr. Schreiber. "This is an open and transparent process, and I urge residents to please go to the Town website, read the draft bylaw and attend one of our Commission meetings to provide input for us so that we can craft an historic preservation bylaw which reflects the views of the community."

Conflicting views on the wisdom of the proposed bylaw will, of course, get a thorough airing if the bylaw is added to the warrant for the Annual Town meeting. Until then, the status of the bylaw's development can be followed by attending Commission meetings, reading posts on the Town website, or reaching out to members of the Commission by contacting Town Hall. □

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A MONTH AT SEA

By Odegaard Fields

For the past month, I have had the unique and lucky experience of traveling down the East Coast by boat. My grandfather, Ned Odegaard, has had a forty-two-foot Ellis 36 (built by Ellis Boat Company of Southeast, Maine) for a year and has been modernizing features onboard “Downeaster,” as he named it, to make cruising easier. On October 7, my parents and I drove to Castine, Maine, where I spent a week prepping and packing food and emergency devices. (One of my responsibilities was a daily cleaning of the Raycor filter that prevents water, algae, and other debris from mixing with the fuel that powers the Ellis 36 diesel motor.) On the 13th, after having some work done on the exterior, Downeaster was put in the water. The next day we loaded it with food, clothing, and various maintenance supplies.

On the 15th, we cast off and headed south to Kennebunkport. We spent two days at Chicks Marina in Kennebunkport to wait for 25 m.p.h. winds to subside and then departed for Cape Cod. Due to the curvature of the coast, we remained more than fifteen miles offshore. The sea was rough, with seven-foot-plus waves. There is a saying, “You will give up before your boat does,” and the Ellis held up admirably, pounding through the water at ten to fourteen knots. Finally, we made it to Sandwich Marina at the top of the Cape Cod Canal, where we met up with family. After they had shaken me like a soda can for six hours straight, the waves we encountered on the remainder of the trip seemed much more manageable.

The next leg of our journey brought us to Safe Harbor Marina



photos by Ned Odegaard

Odegaard Fields takes the helm of his grandfather's Ellis 36.

in Stratford, Connecticut. From there, we cruised through a misty Long Island Sound down the East River to Manhattan. We passed a floating prison, the Staten Island Ferry Terminal, the Statue of Liberty, water taxis. We pulled into One° 15, a Brooklyn pier just south of the Brooklyn Bridge, where I promptly strapped on my rollerblades and crossed the Brooklyn Bridge to skate Manhattan. (Coincidentally, we tied up right next to another Ellis 36!)

From our mooring, we could see my grandfather's old apartment building in Brooklyn Heights when he worked in Manhattan. After a busy day around the city, we resumed our cruise, making our way down the New Jersey coast to South Jersey Marina in Cape May. From there, our route took us down the Atlantic shoreline to Oxford, Maryland, and then to the



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maritime center of Norfolk, Virginia. It was impressive to see an aircraft carrier up close.

We worked our way down the beautiful Intracoastal Waterway, stopping in Southport, North Carolina, and Georgetown, Charleston, and Jekyll Island, South Carolina. Some sections of the Intracoastal are congested enough to impose speed limits, but there are many wild and untouched strips where local fishermen drift around. Finally, we made our way to the Florida Keys, stopping in Islamorada. I had an incredible time with my grandfather,



An Ellis 36 in port photo courtesy Ellis Boat Company

and I learned so much about the maritime industry. It was a bittersweet moment to step off the boat for the last time.

I am applying to Maine Maritime Academy (located in Castine) with the intention of starting in the fall. I was excited about enrolling before the trip. Now, my desire to immerse myself in the maritime world has only grown. □

Odegaard Fields lives in Mill River; his grandfather, Ned Odegaard, is a former owner of The Whip Shop in Southfield

Thank You to Our Contributors:

Linda & Maurice Brazie; Thomas M. Callahan; Sue & Arnold Cohen; Bill & Cathie Litchfield; Hope Schreiber; Joyce & Tom Weeks; Peter & Karla Alfano; Bertrand Garbassi & Jane Larkworthy; David & Natalie Hosford; Beth Teitelman & Jay Kwawer; Gloria Levitas; Neil Lidstone; Kathy Andrus; Joan Hayden; Tara White, in memory of David Lowman's devotion to the 5 Village News; Mary Barton; Ron & Marilyn Bisiewicz; Nancy Bonvillain; Claudette Callahan; Mike & Kathy Giulian; Mike & Janett Miller; Catherine & Peter Hagen; Cindi & Layne Labshere; Meta Levi; Roy Blount; Philip & Patricia Lique; Sy & Edi Mayerson; Jennifer Wright & Gardiner Morse; Steven & Cyndi Nester; Eva & John O'Brien; Diana Stiles Paruta; Mary Ann & Bruno Quinson; John Schreiber; Patricia Sadera; Robert & Nancy Smith; Peter & Abbe Steinglass; Miladeen Wyman; Louise & Nat Yohalem; Robin Tost; Clint & Winnie (Dow) Keeney; Dr. and Mrs. Louis/Clare Rigali; Peter Schuyten; Leslie Wheeler; Joe & Debi Wilkinson; Bob & Debra Beham; Barbara & Daniel Bock; Bette Ann Stalker; Marc Gourevitch & Sabrina Cherry; Ellen Dripps; Robert Forte; Mary Jo & Freddy Friedman; Mike & Kay Jaffe; Helen Maher; Jon & Rosemary Masters; Mill River Farm; Andrew Weinberger; Graeme Whitelaw; Neil Goldstein & Janice Burke; Dawn & Robert Oates; Jim & Kathy Palmer; Harold & Vivian Stalker; Roger Tilles, in memory of David Lowman; Laura Chang & Arnold Chavkin; George & Anita Cook; Ian & Kerri Devine; Chris & Pam Hassett; Jim & Leni Herzog; John & Judy Ladd; Chuck & Robby Liebowitz; Crozer Martin; Jay & Betty Reba; Julie Sandorf; Richard & Pamela Stebbins; Daniel Grant Tear; Jay & Dena Bock; Sherri Gorelick; Nancy Kalodner; Dick & Cally Ryan; Karen Brusie; Raymond Levin & Eileen Shapiro; Ann Getsinger; Harriet Glassman; Frank & Sharon Kellogg; Chris & Priscilla Morrissey; Angelene P. Pell; Peggy Richard; Fred Schoonmaker; Bruce Youmans; Vera Edelman; Linda & Ken Fass; Silvia Eggenberger & Paul Hess; Connie Sussman; Mark Selander; James Rippe; Gerald & Elaine Rosenberg, as a tribute to David Lowman; Anna J. Broggi; Elna Rodda; Les Trois Emmes Vineyard & Winery; Anne Caban & Alan Gewirtzman; Barry & Marjorie Shapiro; Donaldson Brown; Tes & Paul Reed; Aline M. Bove; Anne & William Tatlock; Judith Friedlander; Brian Mikesell & John Weinstein; Linda & Burt Imberman; Mitchell J. Smith; Debra Balken; Fran & Don Cardiff; Eileen & Edgar Koerner; Julie & Alexander Ginzburg; Marilyn & Elihu Katzman; Joan & Wayne Smith; Barrie Stern & Sy Rotker; Alan Krantzler & Frank Potash; Michael Thaler; Marion Rosenfeld & Tom Jones; John T. Gillespie; Barbara & Matthew Kelly; Fern & Mohammad Khan; Cynthia Finkle; Robert & Irene Dvorchik; Nanci & Chris Weaver, in memory of David Lowman; Greg Goewey; Ellen Sweet & Ari Korpivaara; Debra Lavalette; Nancy McWilliams; Gayle & Joe Santucci; Linda Skipper & Jim Singelis; JoJean Travis; David Herrick, to honor Dave Lowman; Jane & Frank Hiza; John & Joan Hotaling; Mark & Taryn Leavitt; Maybelle Jacquemin; John & Holly Valente; Jill Graham & Jim Kelly; Sheila Fitzpatrick; Tom & Ellen Frazier; David L. & Erika Sheldon; Elissa Singer Williams & Richard Zimmerman

FINDING SOLACE IN PHOTOGRAPHY

By Ed Harvey

I have taken a lot of photos, some good, some bad. Of late, I have fewer images. I am not sure whether it's because I am not as challenged as I once was or if having had my camera gear stolen put me back a peg or ten. Perhaps it is a desire to put quality over quantity. In any case, I am still at it, sometimes pushing my new equipment to try to meet my expectations. In other instances I find myself going with my (quite capable) cell phone to act as my time machine and of course sharing the images worldwide in nearly an instant.

Time, ah time, photography breaks it down into fractions of seconds essentially stealing the moment with the photographer becoming the thief and time traveler of the art world. Memories and photos go hand in hand, with most households having boxes, albums, or hard drives full of them, rarely looked back on, but there to be pawed over by reminiscing old-timers or a new generation desiring to know how it was. The latest school portrait hangs on the wall; maybe a wedding, birthday, vacation, or favorite pet adds to the décor of our homes. How many photos have you taken, how many photos of you are there in the world? It is enough of a quandary to make even the stoutest statistician cringe.

The photo, an image if you will, is it real, or was it photo-shopped? How about adding some witty text? Will it become a meme and go viral? Oh just crop my ex out of that family photo. Photo manipulation is nothing new; dodging and burning date back to the earliest days of the field of photography, and yet today the average person can rotate, crop, lighten, and boost shadows, all with an app that comes with its own portable photo studio.

Sometimes it is how you see yourself more than how others see your photos. There are millions of shutterbugs,

snapshot shooters, amateur photographers, and soccer moms filling SD cards. Does photography become a part of your life or ... as it is for me, a form of therapy?

Now and then when life needs a break from me, I take my camera for a ride and go on a safari around town, the region, or, now and then, on vacation. I'll stop and photograph wildlife, landscapes, and other fun things. The push of the shutter button, lining up the rule



of thirds, adding or subtracting elements of the world around me, I find soothing and gratifying. This relaxed style is contrasted by the other kind of photography I am into. A niche of photojournalism called fire photography, which at times involves going to emergency scenes and photographing the tragic history as it unfolds in front

of you. There is, of course a rush that goes with it. The imagery can be quite profound, and the viewer's reaction varies depending on their investment in the incident. As this endeavor has evolved, my local photos are few and far between due to privacy issues and because I am often quite busy in another role when the alarm sounds. There is still the history of our local fire departments that I am invested in preserving in a variety of ways, including photography.

There is much more that could be written about the hobby said to produce an image worth a thousand words, but I'll wrap up with this advice I got from Paul Harvey when he handed me a Polaroid camera at one point in my youth: "Take lots of pictures" and "keep the sun to your back."

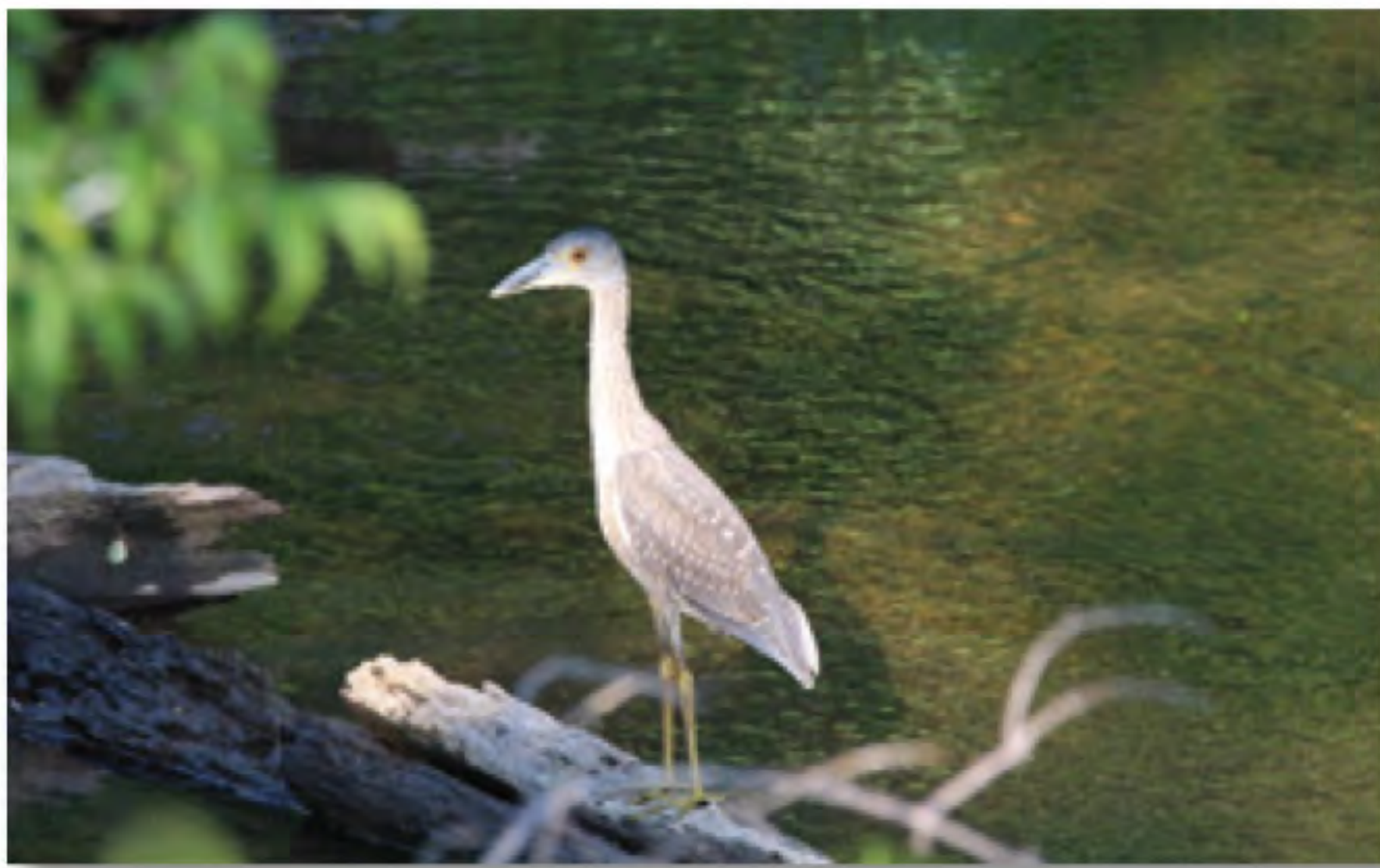
Here are a few photos I hope bring you some of the enjoyment I experienced in creating them. For more of my work, go to www.fireservicephotography.com or [@ruralamericanimages](https://www.instagram.com/ruralamericanimages) on Instagram. □

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THE LOG

Police Department (selected entries)

- Oct. 1 6:19 p.m. A tow is called after a motorist, stopped for speeding on Hartsville New Marlborough Road, is found to be driving an unregistered vehicle without a license.
- 11:25 p.m. A motorist alerts the Department that, having been given the wrong key, he is now locked out of his Hertz rental car and has had to abandon the vehicle on Hartsville New Marlborough Road while he awaits the delivery of the correct key.
- Oct. 2 8:48 a.m. After a caller reports that a pickup truck, spotted on his surveillance cameras, is trespassing on his Mill River village property, the Department determines that the vehicle is unregistered and has it towed.
- 3:30 p.m. A caller reports that a tree has fallen on his car, parked on Umpachene Falls Road.
- Oct. 3 8:47 p.m. A Southfield resident reports that computerized access to his bank account had been hacked into.
- Oct. 4 12:07 a.m. Investigation of a vehicle roll-over on South Sandisfield Road reveals that the driver was operating under the influence of alcohol.
- Oct. 6 2:15 p.m. A Mill River Southfield Road resident expresses his displeasure with the temporary housing of chickens on a nearby New Marlborough Land Trust property.
- Oct. 7 1:00 p.m. The Highway Department is alerted to a low-hanging tree threatening utility wires on Canaan Southfield Road; then National Grid and Verizon are notified when a tanker truck takes down wires in the same area.
- 2:23 p.m. A caller reports that his pickup truck has been stolen from his Mill River village property
- Oct. 10 4:24 p.m. A caller reports shots being fired behind her property on Hadsell Street.
- Oct. 13 10:03 a.m. After having his car towed following a stop for speeding on Hartsville New Marlborough Road, an unlicensed driver departs the scene on his bicycle.
- 8:25 p.m. A driver collides with a deer on Brewer Hill Road.
- Oct. 14 12:00 p.m. A caller reports the theft of information from his Southfield residence.
- 12:35 p.m. A caller asks for advice on how to remove a boat trailer abandoned on his Rhoades and Bailey Road property.
- Oct. 17 10:39 a.m. The Highway Department and Verizon are notified that a fallen tree has taken down phone wires on Clayton Mill River Road.
- Oct. 19 12:11 p.m. A resident complains of a neighbor's habitual speeding and erratic driving past his Southfield property.
- 8:10 p.m. A Norfolk Road resident complains of incessant barking of dogs at a neighboring property.
- Oct. 20 2:31 p.m. Following a stop on South Sandisfield Road, a tow is called for a vehicle the registration of which has been suspended.
- Oct. 21 6:43 a.m. A car hits a deer on Mill River Great Barrington Road.
- Oct. 23 12:32 p.m. A tow is ordered for a car, stopped for speeding, whose driver has a suspended license.
- 2:08 p.m. A caller reports a dead deer at the side of Hartsville Mill River Road.
- 7:30 p.m. Following a two-hour search, aided by state police K-9 patrol and air surveillance, a woman and her son lost in Cookson State Forest are located.
- Oct. 24 3:22 p.m. Tree on wires on Campbell Falls Road.
- Oct. 26 12:26 p.m. An officer removes tree branches blocking Old County Road.
- 12:57 p.m. Tree down on Adsit Crosby Road.
- Oct. 28 11:50 a.m. A caller reports a disabled horse trailer partially blocking Konkapot Road.
- 12:38 p.m. Tree on wires on Clayton Mill River Road.
- Oct. 30 11:57 a.m. A caller reports that he is bringing ten bags of marijuana seedlings he found dumped at his New Marlborough village residence to the Transfer Station.

Graham Frank, Chief of Police

FIRE AND RESCUE

- Oct. 1 1:24 p.m. Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call
- Oct. 3 12:17 p.m. East Hill Road CO Alarm
- Oct. 4 12:12 a.m. South Sandisfield Road MVA
- Oct. 5 7:51 a.m. Mutual Aid to Sandisfield Medical Call
- Oct. 8 3:38 a.m. Hayes Hill Road Medical Call
- Oct. 8 4:19 p.m. East Hill Road Medical Call
- Oct. 9 3:13 a.m. Mutual Aid to Great Barrington Medical Call
- Oct. 9 11:51 a.m. Mutual Aid to Sandisfield Medical Call
- Oct. 10 1:36 p.m. Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm

Oct. 10 7:18 p.m.	Lakeside Road Medical Call	Oct. 23 11:58 p.m.	Red Fox Road Medical Call
Oct. 13 5:52 p.m.	Norfolk Road Fire Alarm	Oct. 24 12:15 a.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call
Oct. 17 4:39 a.m.	Clayton Mill River Road Fire Alarm	Oct. 24 4:42 p.m.	Stratford Road CO Alarm
Oct. 18 1:33 p.m.	Konkapot Road CO Alarm	Oct. 27 10:17 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Fire Alarm
Oct. 18 8:35 p.m.	Konkapot Road CO Alarm	Oct. 30 6:56 p.m.	Mutual Aid to Monterey Structure Fire
Oct. 19 6:08 p.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road CO Alarm	Oct. 31 12:13 a.m.	Hartsville New Marlborough Road Medical Call
Oct. 22 12:12 a.m.	Clayton Mill River Road CO Alarm		
Oct. 22 3:23 p.m.	Stratford Road CO Alarm		
Oct. 23 7:45 p.m.	Hotchkiss Road Lost Hiker		

Fire Company President David Smith

WINTER REMINDERS

Members of New Marlborough Fire and Rescue remind residents to change the batteries in their smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and to test all alarms in their home. Replace smoke alarms that are more than ten years old and CO alarms that are more than five to seven years old. Expired alarms cannot be counted on to alert you and your family to danger. When replacing smoke alarms, models that have ten-year sealed, non-replaceable batteries are now required.

We have seen an increase in the number of carbon monoxide alarm calls that are not false alarms. If the CO alarm in your home sounds, please dial 911. That is what we are here for. We also strongly advise owners of short-term rentals to provide their tenants with this information, and make sure they know to dial 911 if the smoke or carbon monoxide alarms sound.

According to the state Fire Marshal's Office, home fires peak from December through February when the cold weather drives people indoors, heating systems are in regular use, and people turn to alternatives such as space heaters and wood or pellet stoves. Heating is also the leading cause of carbon monoxide poisoning in homes, so make sure you have working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on each floor of your home. Space heater fires are rare but often deadly. Plug space heaters directly into the wall outlet; do not use extension cords, which are the cause of most space heater fires. Place heaters three feet from furniture, bedding, newspapers, drapes, clothes, and other flammable items. Teach children to remain three giant steps away from heaters, stoves, and fireplaces.

With the start of the burning season, residents are reminded to have their furnaces and chimneys cleaned and inspected by a professional and to practice safe burning habits.

- Keep combustibles away from heat sources.
- Store wood outdoors and pellets for stoves indoors but away from heat sources.
- Do not burn wrapping paper or other trash.
- Dispose of the ashes in a metal container, with a secure lid, away from the house. A single ember can remain hot for days without being detected and easily fanned back to life. Many fires have started when ashes were placed inside cardboard boxes, paper bags, or plastic containers and then stored inside the garage, the breezeway, or under the porch.

Fire Company President David Smith

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 by Dorie Greenspan
Peril, by Bob Woodward and Robert Costa

Children's Fiction

The Vanderbeekers: Make a Wish, by Karina Yan Glaser
It Fell From the Sky, by The Fan Brothers
A Walk in the Words, by Hudson Talbott
I Love Insects, BY Lizzy Rockwell
Apple of My Pie, by Mika Song
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Town Administrator: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Planning Board: Second and fourth Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.
Board of Health: First Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
Conservation Commission: Last Saturday of the month at 9:00 a.m.
Board of Assessors: Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Fire Department training: Every Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. at the fire station
Building Inspector: Monday 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. or by appointment.
First Responders: Meeting/training: First and third Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. at the fire station
Cultural Council: Second Thursday at 4:15 p.m at the library
Post Office: Mill River (413) 229-8582 — if and when it re-opens:
 Window hours: Monday - Friday 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
 Saturday 9:00 - 11:30 a.m.
Southfield (413) 229-8476
 Window hours: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
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Town Treasurer: Monday & Tuesday 8:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.
Tax Collector: Monday 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Tues and Thurs 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Selectmen's Administrative Secretary: Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Dog and Animal Control Officer: Cassie Keeley, (413) 429-7603
Town Clerk: 229-8278; 7:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. weekdays; Saturday by appointment
Town Hall: 229-8116
Police: Business office: 229-8161
Library: 229-6668

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Other businesses can be listed in the Service Sector (see back page). Questions, rates? Call Barbara Lowman: 229-2369

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